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ABSTRACT

A study explored how ethnically diverse students in an urban high school worked collaboratively to conceive and execute original theater pieces that addressed issues of relevance to them. Subjects, 29 of the original 51 seniors in the theater institute program at Hillcrest High School, New York City, completed pre- and posttests, written statements, and logs. Data also included interviews with students, tape recordings of student discussion and rehearsals, audience reaction, and feedback from other teachers and the principal. Results indicated that: (1) classroom attendance increased; (2) students took more and more responsibility and became more proactive; (3) students used both their local and school libraries on an ongoing basis; and (4) while students (in their initial writing exercises) indicated they did not have anything to write about, by the end of the program the major problem was that there was too much material to fit into the production. (Forty-four references, the pre-post questionnaire, the student biographical questionnaire, teacher-researcher log form, student log forms, resource questionnaires, and post-production questionnaires are attached.) (RS)

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AN EXPLORATION INTO THE WRITING OF ORIGINAL SCRIPTS BY INNER-CITY HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA STUDENTS

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Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the United States Department of Education

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BACKGROUND

Statement of Investigation

This study explores how ethnically diverse students in an urban high school work collaboratively to conceive and execute original theatre piece that address issues of relevance to them. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of a such a collaborative undertaking on these students who, prior to the study, were not especially motivated neither to write nor to work cooperatively.

Of particular significance was the development and improvement of their writing skills and their personal expression. The way in which the students developed the themes of their script, the development of both personal independence and class interdependence are detailed in the study as well as emerging problem solving and critical thinking skills in the students.

Need for the Study

In a society that is increasingly more and more materialistic it seems critical that educators and artists make every attempt to teach young people the importance of values, ideals, and culture - the humanistic approach to life. The National Endowment for the Arts' 1988 report to Congress, *Toward Civilization* stated that, "... arts education can help...(students) to understand the unchanging elements in the human condition. It can teach them to see and hear as well as read and write. It can help them understand what civilization is so that as adults they can contribute to it." (1988:v)

Over the past few decades, many educators and artists alike have written about the importance of including fine arts and music in the educational process of American students. Many studies reveal the educational value of these two art forms. Art and music teachers are usually well trained in, the techniques and skills of their disciplines. Most districts include fine arts specialists on their faculties although.

The case is very different in drama/theatre studies. This subject area is often taught by a non-theatre-trained English or speech teacher. There is a wide-spread assumption that virtually anyone can teach theatre/drama-just as it is often thought that anyone can "put on" a play. This situation is usually the case for those traditional theater education programs totally dependent on scripted theater productions. The case for the value of unscripted theater education is usually not even on the agenda of school systems. This type of topic is not widely understood or valued by educators, even among those theater educators who only teach in traditional (scripted) theater education programs. Therefore, research is absolutely essential to define and construct the case for the value of this type of activity.

Overall, theater allows for a multitude of learning opportunities. Non-scripted theater curricula offers students the chance to developed critical thinking, communication and writing skills while demonstrating the necessity to collaborate, accept and understand conflicting viewpoints. The development of a heightened sense of self-esteem is yet another benefit. Most significantly, in this time of genuine change in the ways in which information is transmitted instruction defined, this type of curriculum clearly demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary learning.

For the past thirteen years, the students in the Theatre Institute program at Hillcrest High School had culminated their study in Theatre Arts with a final project suitable for presentation to an audience. The students were allowed to select one of the following as a final project:

- creating their own original script,
- presenting a compilation of material from existing sources,
- or mounting an established two act play with the teacher as the director.

The researcher noticed the students have indicated that traditional theater was not "for people like us", "no one looks like us on stage" or "no one writes about the dreams and problems we share." Thus, their choice was to attempt a collaboration involving original scripts reflecting their personal expressions. Their subsequent involvement with the creative process has been a enriching learning experience, not without enormous doubts and frustrations for student and teacher alike.

The process has evolved into one exploring artistic, critical, pedagogical and humanistic issues. It is the researcher's belief that the functions involved in conceiving and executing an original theatre piece provides the students with an educational experience that will encourage them to view theatre as an art form that:

- allows for a vision of the world
- teaches
- inspires
- encourages collaboration, camaraderie and friendships
- develops an understanding of diversity
- encourages the development of self-esteem and self-discipline

while developing skills in:

- writing
- oral expression
- problem-solving
- interpersonal relationships
- development of critical judgment

The researcher has found through the evaluative measures developed in this project that it did, in fact, result in improvements in:

- understanding of interdependency
- critical analysis of issues important to students while using play writing as a vehicle
- heightened self-esteem
- negotiating skills
- student identification of personal goals
- and the role of theatre/drama in our society

To examine how the students involved in this project worked collaboratively to create and execute a work of their own creation is, to lay a foundation for their future explorations into the learning process. It is for this reason and the many other benefits addressed above that the researcher believes there is a great need for this type of curriculum in the theatre/drama classroom.

Related Literature

Since John Dewy, educators have realized that "learning by doing" is one of the most effective means of educating our young people. The disciplines involved in a drama/theatre classroom pave the way for exactly that kind of education. The richness of experiences involved in the pursuit of understanding a play so that it can be compellingly performed, makes clear the benefits of the arts in educating students.

Gavin Bolton, a noted British theatre in education expert (1985) and Harold Oakes (1988), both state that drama is a means by which educators can provide meaning for students as they examine and judge the world around them. At the moment, American education neglects to provide sufficient opportunities for a learner to make connections and synthesis out of the disconnected facts with which he/she is constantly bombarded. It is essential that educational programs offer students the opportunity to become involved in learning situations that develop problem solving, negotiation and conflict resolution skills.

Bolton continues by stressing:

> ... drama is a collective experience, celebrating or commenting not on how we are different from each other but on what we share, on what ways we are alike. Drama is a form of group symbolism seeking universal...truths. (1988:154)

The Project this researcher chose to develop and examine, deals with this communal, collaborative learning experience.

In Rosenberg and Pendergast's work, an historical perspective for actor-

oriented collaboration of theatre pieces is provided. In addition the authors outlined the necessary steps in the process of creating a work. This logical framework supported and assisted the researcher's own discovery of the appropriate methods for working with adolescents on their original scripts. Of particular significance was the creation of a time-table for activity. (Pendergast and Rosenberg, 1983)

Robert Olson's work provides an excellent practical methodology for exploration of students' creative abilities. These exercises enable students to regard old problems in innovative ways. The author supports the theory that creativity can be taught. His research at S.U.N.Y. Buffalo revealed that, by the end of one class in creativity, students had almost doubled their creative thinking ability. (Olson 1980:4) Similarly, Betty Edwards opens the mind to alternative ways of seeing which ultimately leads to more creative abilities in problem solving. Her work allows student artists to "see" more. (Edwards 1981) Both Olson and Edwards support the interdisciplinary aspects of arts education with the creative experience potential.

Stanley Rosner and Lawrence E. Abt suggest that creativity is not a mystical experience but one that lends itself to investigation.(1970:381) The study of the creative process is extremely useful to educators in any classroom; particularly since it involves discovery and evolution, open mindness, flexibility, willingness to trust one's own instinct, and curiosity. (ibid:385) These are the elements essential to a rich learning situation. Collaboration is a significant source of stimulation.

Viola Spolin's work with improvisational games focuses on group interaction and creative collaborative. The point of concentration is to allow the individual to become part of a whole. The side coaching that is an integral part of Spolin's format assists the group in staying on focus and provides a way in which the leader can work without making value judgments. (1970) The method allows the teacher to become a guide and a fellow player rather than the teacher .

Dorothy Heathcote, another leading British Theatre-in-Education expert, encourages students to exercise control over the growing meaning of their work. Her work influenced the teacher-researcher to explore a new student-teacher relationship. Her theoretical framework encourages students to take ownership of their project.(O'Neill 1988) In addition, the theatre/drama experience forces students to acquire specific knowledge related to specific tasks. It demands that they internalize and utilize new skills immediately. Dorothy Heathcote (Wagner 1985) in "Drama of Learning: Mantle of the Expert" characteristically sets up the students as individuals who have the right to ask questions, arrive at decisions, develop judgments and draw conclusions. In the role of creators, the students develop these skills.

Drama is a collective experience. It celebrates our similarities and

enhances our concepts of cooperative living. It is a means by which we look to form universal truths. (Bolton, 1988:151) Therefore theatre represents a basic human experience. It can be noticed in the development of the child. Quite naturally a child experiences and comprehends his/her environment through dramatic play. The personal experience, afforded by performance, is an appropriate foundation for a clearer sense understanding of ones life. (Oakes, 1988:42)

Dewy's position on experiential learning also suggests that an individual learns in an additive manner, layering new experiences on old . Furthermore the content is but one component in a lesson. Of far greater significance is the mode of learning. (1963:48) It is the mode of learning leading to continue learning that will be of the greatest importance in a student's future. Drama/theatre skills can provide that opportunity.

Too often academic research emanates not only from the top down but more inappropriately, from outside of the school experience. Often it is conducted under ideal circumstances than what is reality in schools and most usually does not take into account the day-to-day workings of a real classroom situation. According to Myron Atkin, former Dean of the graduate School of Education at Stanford University, "not much progress in education is likely to take place unless teachers become agents in the improvement of their own practice. A better balance is needed between theory and practice." (Phi Delta Kappa 1989). Jeanne Klein, director of Theatre for Young People and Vice Chair of the research committee for American Alliance for Theatre and Education, states that so much effort and time is spent by the experts in the field advocating the inclusion of drama/theatre in the mainstream curriculum, that there is little energy or time left for adequate research in the field. Her experience leads her to the belief that it is the appropriate time to develop and implement the research that will make the case for drama/theatre curriculum in K-12 education. Although there is some theoretical exploration of the significance of artistic development in relation to learning, much more needs to be done in order to create " greater credibility and validity." (Klein 1989:29) She suggests that research studies are needed to describe and assess the connections concerning self-esteem, dramatic processes and the social skills needed by students. Research is also needed on the differences between students who create theatre from published scripts in comparison to those who develop original theatre scripts. Such studies could assist in the development of a planned Advanced Placement Test in theatre for students entering college. (ibid:31) Finally, David Hopkins' work offers necessary support for the teacher/researcher. He proposes different perspectives on approaches to research. Teachers, themselves often so badly in need of feelings of self worth can be assisted in some degree through the development of professional judgment. Those who engage in research are developing their "professional judgment" and are then capable of moving toward emancipation and autonomy. These qualities are essential to a good classroom situation. (Hopkins 1985:24-25)

DESIGN OF STUDY

Setting

Hillcrest High School is a New York City comprehensive school located in Jamaica Queens. The school has approximately 3,000 students; its population drawn from neighboring communities as well as from outlying areas of Queens. The school offers various specialized programs as magnet divisions. The Theatre Institute is one of these magnet programs.

Students are chosen for this program through a general audition process; however almost all the students who express a genuine interest in participating are accepted. There is an official review of their work during the semester at which time some are asked to leave the program. The reasons for dismissal are usually related to attendance and/or discipline. No student who expresses interest or effort is ever denied the opportunity to continue to be a part of this program since this magnet is not intended as professional training.

The Speech/Theatre department and enrollment are small within a large school. The administration merely tolerates the theatre program. There is no resistance, but there is also no real feeling of encouragement for either teacher or student. The usual attitude of theatre as a "frill," "good public relations," prevails. The faculty does not view the work done on an arts project as significant and contributory to the learning process or as worthy of effort as a "core subject" would be. This attitude is conveyed to the drama students..

The neighborhood and community surrounding the school have not been involved in activities in the school building. There are many of the typical problems in the community that exist in most inner city settings; i.e., the area is filled with drug related problems and many of the students live in violence-riddled areas.

There is a small but active Parents Association. The extra curricular activities are well attended by the students and the evening theater performances receive the support of the student body and the parents of the students involved.

Racial/Ethnic Composition 1988-1989

Black	Asian	Hispanic	White
52.7%	14.1%	22.5%	10.8%

Attendance

80% - 84% Average Daily Attendance

Graduation Rate
46.9% graduated
29.8% still enrolled

Poverty Index
24.6%
(not Chapter I School)

School Facility
operating at 119% capacity

Writing Level (RCT)
80% at or above grade level

Reading Level (RCT)
81% at or above grade level

Student Profile

- 38 students were reading on or above grade level.
- 2 students were reading below grade level.
- 1 student was designated as a Special education student
- 10 of the students were taking Advanced Placement English concurrently with the theatre class.
- 4 members of the class were on the Executive Board of the Student Government.
- 3 students were actively involved on the gymnastics team
- 3 students were cheerleaders

Everyone of the students said they had a job either after school, or on the weekends. Much of the resources of these jobs are directly contributed to their families. All were concerned about money issues and family support. There were a number of students with serious family difficulties.

The major constraint is that of time. In a building where the bell ends a session every 40 minutes there is great difficulty in maintaining a sense of continuity. Drama students became very involved in their creative process and were often frustrated in not being able to complete their task in the confines of school periods. Furthermore the demands made on a teacher with five classes of thirty plus students each, a building assignment, and an official class is somewhat overwhelming. The amount of planning necessary to a project such as this, if it is to be successful is enormous.

Traditionally theatre/drama is not viewed by the powers that-be as a main stream subject, and although these students "love" the class, they were not encouraged by the system to view the subject as important. Any extra work that was involved was not deemed as important by other faculty members.

Documentation

Description of Theatre Institute program:
Students enter into the theatre institute program as freshmen and take one class per day in theatre. Their program in their sophomore year is the same. As juniors and seniors they take a double period of theatre.

Documentation for this project is based on:

- pre-post tests
- interviews with students (recorded)
- written statements
- logs students and teacher
- tape recording of student discussion and rehearsals
- pertinent information gathered from student's permanent record cards, counselor records, report cards, attendance records
- reading scores
- reports from audience re: reactions to the production
- feedback from other teachers and the Principal

Description of students involved in the project:
All were seniors in the Theatre Institute program at Hillcrest High School and had completed three years of work in theatre studies.

Initially the project involved:

- 44 women
- 7 Men
- 29 Black
- 2 White
- 13 Hispanic
- 2 Asian American

Of the original 51 members of the class, 11 dropped out of the project, 3 were truant from approximately the third week on, as well as 8 students did not participate because of the after school commitments. During class time they were involved in separate projects. The remaining 29 students agreed to be part of the research project.

Based on the results of a questionnaire taken by 39 students (Appendix A) the following results were found:

- 31% planned to major in theatre in college
- 31% would be involved in extra curricula activities
- 10% were undecided
- 15% planned to minor in theatre
- 12% were absent
- 18% did not return questionnaires

The following outlines the students previous theater background:

- all had been to the theatre at least three times
- 24 have seen musicals
- 9 have seen a Shakespearean play
- all had been to the theatre for the first time as early as 5 years old, and as old as 14

10 A

- 5 read plays outside of the classroom
- 27 had performed before
- 2 had never performed before
- 5 had written a play or scene before our work
- 5 No answers

When asked what was the function or purpose of theatre:

- 27 students viewed it to be for enjoyment or entertainment
- 12 students viewed it to enlighten
- 9 students viewed it as a means of self expression
- 6 students viewed it as an escape or release
- 2 students viewed it as a mirror of society

The student's background in dramatic literature was seriously lacking. They had read some Shakespeare, Miller and Ibsen. Since they had all worked on scenes in their junior year, they had some familiarity with portions of dramatic works but in most cases they had not read the entire texts.

Methodology

At the beginning of the project students were informed of the research agenda and were asked for their help in accomplishing the goals of the project. The researcher requested for the students to keep logs focusing on their reactions to the progress of their work which was accepted by them. They understood that they would be forming their own theatre production company and would be involved in conceiving and executing their own theatre piece.

Administration of the Pre-test
The following is an outline of the steps in the project.

1. Exploration of the Working Space
   Questionnaire (Appendix B) designed to focus the class on what an appropriate space for the activities of the project would be -- on the stage or in the auditorium. The researcher designed this as a beginning attempt to define individual learning styles and to free them to make choices based on previous experience and attitudes.

2. Explanation of the project
   In essence, they were to conceive and mount a theatre piece to be presented to an audience. The target date was to be 3-4 months into the future.

3. Explanation of the Research Portion of the Project
   The following questions were raised in class:
   - How can we study ourselves as we work so that others may benefit from our experiences?

- What are the problems?
- What are the challenges?
- What are the solutions?
- How do we work together?
- Should we work together?

4. Creative Exercises:
   These included exercises built around:
   - visual awareness - new ways of seeing
   - auditory awareness - new ways of hearing
   - reactions to experiences
   - environment
   - defining oneself. What roles do we play? Who are we?

5. Exercises for developing sense of ensemble
   The exercises were designed to developed skill in:
   - conforming to an agreed standard of activity
   - trust of teacher and fellow classmates
   - understanding differences
   - listening to others
   - acting and reacting to each other

6. The development of play writing skills included:
   - writing observations of street activities
   - "eavesdropping" and recording conversations
   - writing the moment
   - tragic and comic events recorded in monologue and dialogue formats
   - character sketches
   - descriptions of space, scene and situation
   - improvisations on given circumstances

7. The theme for the script and decisions regarding structure of the work were established.

8. Selection of personnel - Director(s), Stage Manager(s), Designer(s), Music Committee, Play writing Committee

9. Writing and formation of the script (Appendix D)

10. Casting/rehearsal schedule

11. Design of set and costumes and lights

12. Program design and execution

13. Rehearsals script changes and cast changes

14. Technical and dress rehearsals

15. Performance

16. Evaluation of the work and the final production.

17. Analysis of the problems

18. Feedback from the school community.(Appendix E)

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of Students Logs and Interviews

In the beginning (first month) students resisted discussion. They wanted to "get to work," "work" defined by them differently than by the researcher. Because they were engaged in interesting and far ranging discussions instead of tightly structured "academic" activities they didn't realize they were in fact "working."

First Month [Eileen] "...I personally do not believe that we are going to get this play off the ground..."

First Month [Nicole] "...the ideas are good but I think there needs to be more of a focus. At the rate it happened today, it'll be October before anything even starts to be written..."

First Month [Jerry] "...finding a theme we can all agree on is going to be very rough..."

The students were learning to work with each other in a radically different dynamic. The classroom became student rather than teacher-directed; they were accustomed to working with established scripts and ideas within a teacher-directed classroom. It took some time before they could trust themselves, each other and the teacher. The new way of working in a classroom led to the ownership of this project and a deeper involvement in the educational process. The students were becoming active participants in problem solving, using their newly learned critical thinking skills.

The project had a noticeable affect on creating positive self-images. Many students initially reluctant to try new experiences found themselves eagerly exploring many new roles. [Adriane], normally a quiet student who did not voluntarily participate in class discussions, was encouraged by her success with play writing to try her hand at acting. She ultimately even requested to be given a "big scene" to do. This was a major step forward for her. She said she had been reluctant to act in the past because she didn't trust her abilities. She felt the rest of the class had better dramatic skills; however, her positive experience with writing gave her the confidence to try something new -- acting. Her classmates enthusiastic, support and complements about her writing helped her take a risk. Eventually, her writings in turn, inspired others. For example, another student wrote a number of monologues that grew out of scenes written by Adriane.

Second Month Adriane R."...I participate more. Of course I always planned to get involved once things got started but until you put me in charge I had no real responsibility. Now I feel more important."

Fourth Month "... I think a cast should be like a family....it is almost (putting on a play) like birth. There are labor, work, sweat and tears. It's a little painful. Everyone has to do their share.... It's going to be hard, but its worth it."

[Jerome] initially could not seem to find a place of comfort for himself in this production. He started out with a music group but found that they were not including his ideas in the collaborative work underway.

Second Month [Jerome] "... every time I suggest an idea everyone seems to reject it, but I'm try to have some impack (sic) on this class... also when I'm in the music group them girls really don't value our criticism.(sic)"

Second Month After a discussion about the importance of everyone contributing to the play he wrote: "... the impression I got out of our talk yesterday was that, the guys need to have some impack (sic) on this production. The guys also need to write to show their ideas. We all have to work together in this effort."

[Jerome] and [Paul] ultimately wrote a piece together about a basketball player who never gets to play. [Jerome] after much coercion by the directors and members of the cast agreed to play the part. His performance grew tremendously at each rehearsal. His portrayal was sensitive, funny and extremely touching. He was always at rehearsal, ready to work. He listened to others, and seemed to be very concerned with the success of the play. It was clear that [Jerome] felt extremely good about himself after this experience and developed a much closer, more trusting relationship with his peers. He was much more active in the class and noticeably more verbal. His self image improved markedly. He applied to several 2 year colleges.

The students began to confront problems that interfered with the progress of the script and found ways to negotiate the difficulties. A few students assigned to a research project for development of the script did not do their work; the class confronted them about this. It was finally agreed to have a daily report, at the beginning of the class, from each group summarizing their efforts of the day before. The report served to; keep the groups focused, allow all of the students to clearly see the progress or lack of it and to set up a self-regulating process to which all students could agree. A problem had been addressed by the members of the group without any outside assistance -- they were beginning to find their own solutions. Not only did the students arrive at a workable solution, they developed a new respect for each other and the work.

Individual work of [Radiah], [Debra] and [Naeemah] on a dance that was to be set in the opening of the play, inspired others to work harder on their pieces. Their efforts served as an inspiration to the group which then

moved towards the staging of the opening scene. Building a play collaboratively enabled the class to see themselves as a whole while relying, on individual efforts. Responsible behavior came to be seen as a necessity.

The expectation that "someone else" would make sense out of their script or "give them the ideas" soon gave way to the realization that this was *their* work and only *their* efforts would make it succeed. Students embraced this new responsibility and concept with great vigor. In a discussion about the costumes and set. [Ruth] said, " Stop asking the teacher . This is our project not hers... we can make that decision." Much of the work, after this comment, became more energetic and more interesting. The scenes were specific and grew from personal experiences. They were writing about their world. The production reflected the ideas and feelings of the students.

The students began to discover that it was necessary to focus on making the script into a coherent story. They engaged themselves in solving this artistic challenge with their newly learned skills. The students took the "idea of the story" and through improvisation and discussion formulated the scenes. Using rising action, dramatic action, resolution and climax they created a script. It ultimately reflected their discussions of other literary works through which new depths of understanding were achieved. The script began to have authentic meaning for them.

Yet another significant aspect of the work on this project was their increased ability to communicate with each other. They worked ever more patiently with each other as they constantly adjusted or compromised, found ways to explain what they meant and learned to rephrase their ideas.

The selection of a director, stage manager, and designer meant that the students had to make the important decisions for the production. The group decided that those who wished to have the jobs should address the company; making a statement as to their intentions. They would have to answer questions voiced by the rest of the group. After deliberation, the entire group would make the final choices. They followed the outline of a procedure with seriousness and caution. Their selection of [Nancy] and [Michelle] were thoughtful choices and excellent ones. Both young women proved to be strong forces in the development of the script. They were respectful of the disparate ideas that were presented by many students as they gradually evolved a vision for the production. They were respected by the cast and their decisions were rarely questioned. [Michelle's] talents as an actress blossomed and she found new strengths in her ability to inspire her peers. She was able to use her skills as an actress to assist her in her newer role as director. [Nancy's] strength as stage manager and technical crew augmented [Michelle's] abilities and they formed a dynamic team. Initially [Michelle] was unconvinced about doing an original script.

First Month "... I must say that I am a little skeptical about the play because we are writing it. As you know I have little faith in such things..."

[Michelle] was finally responsible not only for directing the play but was the co-author of one of the scenes that received the most attention. By the end of the production she said that she would definitely want to write more and was looking forward to involvement in future collaborative efforts.

The scene that she wrote with two other students on racial tension was extremely insightful and an excellent theatrical piece. They were very proud of their work and the reaction that it received.

This project was a means by which one could instill a new understanding for the role of evaluation. The play was revised and adjusted as the students discovered what worked and what did not work. The writers, the directors, actors, designers all had to be able to accept rejection of their ideas. Although there were some heated moments, they quickly learned to see criticism as part of the process and to use it to their advantage. The company began to use the language of criticism. Rather than to label things as "good" or "bad", they thought in terms of things working or not working. They were able to describe what they saw and how that made them feel as an audience. They listened to the words used in the dialogues and were able to discover whether that created and developed character or if it contradicted the development. They were able to adjust their own characters to the nuances of the scene.

The outside world soon became an integral part of their work. There had been a discussion in [Nina's] social studies class about the Howard Beach and Bensonhurst incidents (ugly racial incidents that received nation wide media attention). In that discussion [Nina] recognized some subtle yet strong feelings of prejudice which she wanted to capture in a scene. She felt racism was an important issue and needed to be explored. In an enlightened session on how they might include the issues of racial tension and prejudice and stereotyping into their script, a new collaboration formed which created a scene based on her comments. [Nina] was thrilled that her idea had been translated into a work that was so affecting.

Students learned to work with criticism. As the project developed there was ample opportunity for the students to experience evaluation, criticism and sometimes rejection of their ideas. Early in the process, if ideas were not accepted, the reaction was defensive. Anger and confrontation resulted. After working together and discovering the importance of compromise and the rules of collaboration, students were more objective about their ideas and could accept change, amendments and often rejection. Throughout the process one could see the trust develop and evolve. The reason seemed to be that if they were asked for an original idea, by virtue of the idea being provided, it automatically must be accepted. This attitude followed

common practice in this inner city school where teachers were so grateful to actually receive homework that evaluation was rarely applied.

The students' often had the most trouble accepting criticism from the teacher. It often seemed that the teacher had to like or approve of everything that was suggested.

The student's concerns went through a series of changes. Before the project got under way they were concerned with whether or not this play would ever happen. As the topics were being discussed, their feeling centered on; getting their ideas heard, their writings listened to, their music approved of and their dance ideas accepted. The focus was clearly on themselves. The underlying consideration was the way the audience would look at them.

During the selection of the directors, designers, choreographers, stage managers, publicity and program designers - the class was focused on who was the most expert in that area. A few wanted the jobs because of the implied power in the position, but many others clearly considered the qualifications of the person.

[Dionne] became stage manager and was very disappointed to learn that as such she would not be able to act in the production. She wanted to quit the stage manager position, but was coerced into staying with the job; ultimately she came through with flying colors. She had never stage - managed before and had problems with some of the tasks. But in the end - Dionne wrote

Post-play "...when I was picked to be stage manager I didn't know the jobs that a stage manager was suppose to do. When I found out that a stage manager was not in the play I was upset and wanted to quit but you wouldn't let me quit, Mrs. Horn, I was mad at you but I am glad that you didn't let me quit now. Because it was great working with the lights and everything..."

As the students worked on the script and the issues that would be included, their concerns moved from themselves to a surface confrontation with the material. Now they had moved to the broader underlying issues. They brought in all sorts of ideas about "things" that should be said in the play. They began to see the way certain aspects of their world affected their thinking and the lives of their friends. Many personal stories were viewed in the light of larger issues. The idea of society and its problems entered into their view of this production. How it (the play) could reflect their view of the world. They shared innumerable events that they had witnessed or that had been their personal experience. Many of the students shared these things for the first time. They were encouraged by the concern of their peers, and were glad for an opportunity to express these feelings.

The next stage involved the presentation of the material - the theatrics of the production - how it would look, sound etc. During this part of the process there were problems with scheduling and rehearsal. Some students found it difficult to stay after school. There were many entries about this in their logs. Those who could stay after school were resentful of those who did not. What began as a project that was to involve ALL the students in the Theatre Institute program ended having to eliminate 5 students and minimizing the involvement of at least 5 others. The researcher found this issue of attendance at rehearsals a difficult one, both professionally and personally. Often the students could have attended but found others things that they needed to do. There was little encouragement or support from their homes to commit to the extra rehearsals.

Learning to resolve acting problems during rehearsals allowed the students to accent the importance of process. Prior to this experience they insisted that practice was not necessary. They found learning dance steps and memorizing lines easy, which fostered the idea that a scene did not need to be "gone over" more than a few times. They resisted the notion that rehearsals were to be used for discovery. They had preconceived ideas of how to "do a character." Their character work rarely grew beyond their first readings. However, the collaborative process forced students to pay attention to the work of peers and they began to move beyond "adequate" and seek out "better." The use of rehearsal techniques and the incorporation of acting skills opened the actors up to new interpretations and the play gained new dimensions. Although the group wanted to finalize their performances early on, their experience in the process of writing the script made them more receptive to trying these process oriented concepts in terms of direction and acting. They were delighted with the results.

One success inspired another. During one rehearsal [Shadid] brought in a pair of funny looking shoes as a prop for the Prom scene. He had discovered that his character was a poor dresser. His use of the shoes and the new character element affected not only the actress who shared the scene with him but the entire ensemble as well. Together they tried new scene blocking that added a whole new perspective to the scene. Its success also inspired others to try some new pieces of business. Suddenly they had ideas about how costumes should reflect their characters. It was an excellent example of creative collaboration. Previously there had been great success when five of the females had been inspired by two other students work on a dance. The result of that inspiration coupled with the previously mentioned class discussion on racism resulted in another scene. The class had been feeling a bit down about the progress of the play; when the group saw the dance the class immediately fell into work again and the "Racial Tension/Social Studies class" was born.

During the design stage of the project two experts were brought in to address the concerns of the group with regard to sets and lights. The group was prepared to ask questions that would assist them with the design of the set

and the lights. The sharing of information at this session helped to bring to fruition the ideas that ultimately resulted in the finished set.

[Shahid] and [Jerry] discovered they had a talent for building; the rest of the company relied on them to create the set. The two young men formed a close bond. [Shahid] stated that he had no idea that he could ever "come up with the idea for a set... and if someone told me I would be able to build and paint it I would have told them they was crazy..."

During rehearsals the concerns of the actors, directors, designers came to be centered around the piece itself. Would it be understood? Would the audience like it? Would they empathize? How could they most effectively present this moment? Could they be heard? Seen? Would everyone pull together? For the first time, they began to take the warmup exercises very seriously. They encouraged each other, listened and worried together.

Opening night backstage became a scene of camaraderie and cooperation. The play belonged to the students. It was their major concern. The concentration, focus and group effort was exemplary. The performances were sharp, sensitive, funny, natural, spontaneous and GOOD. The audience's reaction was extremely positive. They did understand. All the nuances, all the subtext - received an appropriate reaction. The cast and crew felt extremely proud of themselves and each other. During the evaluation sessions many expressed some surprise that it had worked out as well as it did. Some felt it had to do mainly with their ability to work together, that it was a script about which they felt very strongly. They discovered that they could influence the thinking of others - even if it was only momentarily. They were able to find issues of significance to their lives, translate them into a theatre piece and affect the people who saw their creation.

And finally when all is said and done and the dust settles ... [Carla's] line in her last log entry..." I feel less lonely now.", just about says it all.

As a result of this project:

- School attendance for the participants improved markedly
- Students willingly engaged in an enthusiastic, energetic exchange of ideas with each other
- Students worked cooperatively in small and large groups to complete specific tasks.
- Students set goals, evaluated their completion and set new goals
- Students shared in decision making and problem solving.
- Students found that they had valuable ideas that were worth writing about.
- A large number of students positively reassessed their ability to assume a leadership role.
- 77% of the students saw themselves as important members of their class.

- Students used their community and saw members of their immediate community as helpful
- Students saw themselves as capable of putting on a play.
- The project directly influenced many of the students' abilities to communicate with their parents. Parents saw their child in a new way and many were pleasantly surprised at their child's performance expressing pleasure at seeing their children behaving responsibly and with a sense of dedication and commitment.

Analysis of Data and Conclusions

As much as the students learned from this experience so did the researcher/teacher. It is essential that the educational community and those that influence its structure be made aware of the power of the theatre/drama experience in the learning process. This format can be used in many different educational settings. It would be most interesting if an English or Social Studies or Science class were to embark on this process. They would, of course need the assistance of a theatre teacher/artist to implement the process. Needless to say there are many implications here for work in all the disciplines.

It is most important that there be some concentration in teacher training. The study of theatre skills is invaluable for anyone that is involved in the educational system. It is about life, about learning, about growing, about process, about discovery.

The scope of this project is overwhelming. It has unlimited avenues for work on; aesthetic, critical, evaluative, and pedagogical issues.

- the actor's work on the role; discovery of oneself through the work on another; gaining insight into behavior.
- conceptualization - from the abstract to the concrete and vice versa
- choices -discovering option, consequences of choices.
- translation of ideas from one medium to another.
- concept of what is satisfying.
- value of criticism -self evaluation and others evaluation.
- methods of evaluation and criticism.
- relating experiences to the world around us.
- use of the arts to humanize - to envision - to make choices
- collaboration
- realization of one's ideas.
- development of critical thinking problem solving and negotiation skills.

There is strong implication for further research on :

- teacher/student relationships in this setting,

- interdisciplinary projects
- use of community resources
- collaboration among staff
- learning styles
- theatre/drama discipline based projects
- teacher training in drama skills
- teacher as artist in the classroom

Assessment of Attendance and Attitude Towards School during the Project.

Classroom attendance increased in a school where general attendance barely reached 80% during the project. 97% of the students were in class every day. Lateness to class decreased by 25%.
Attendance in other classes and a change in attitude towards school was reported by parents.

> "My daughter feels much better about school now...she will be applying to college, before she did not wish to go..."
>
> A student who was truant previous to the project wrote " this project has made me want to come to school. I am in bad shape with credits so when this is over (the project) I am going to try to go to City as School (an alternative program) and use my experience here to get a high school diploma..."
>
> A fellow teacher who had the occasion to speak with some of the students involved in the project reported - "...one of your students decided not to drop out of school because of this project. She told me that she thinks she's a better student than she used to be and is going to work at staying in school.
>
> A guidance counselor reported _ "[Jerome] had really sporadic attendance in the 10th and 11th grades. Now I see him in school every day.

Self Esteem

In answer to the following question I AM A LEADER, the following responses were noted.

Pre-test 33% of the students agreed or strongly agreed whereas on the
Post- test 54% of the students agreed or strongly agreed.

Pretest 34% of the students disagreed and the
Post-test 14% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed.

As the project progressed the students took more and more responsibility for the word. They became more pro-active. There was a marked decline in their passively waiting to be told what to do. Instead they saw what was

needed and did it. They elected leaders and allowed them final decisions but they did not abandon their own responsibilities.

In response to the question I AM AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF MY CLASS, the following was noted.

Pre- Test 67% of the students agreed or strongly agreed
Post -test 77% of the students agreed or strongly agreed.

Pre-test 21% of the students disagreed or disagreed strongly
Post -test only 5% disagreed.

A number of students wrote in their logs that at the outset of the project they were unsure of themselves in the class environment. They were nervous about participating. However, by the end of the project they were confident about their role in the work. They felt that they were an essential part of the whole. One male student who didn't want to write initially, stated

> "I see we (the guys) have to write more... we are important because otherwise there won't be any guy ideas...(sic)"

Another student who felt very isolated at the beginning and did not participate in any of the discussions

> "I didn't think anyone would care about me but now I see that they do."

Use of Resources Outside of the Classroom

Students used both their local and school libraries on an on-going basis. Approximately 25% of the class registered at their libraries at the beginning of the project. 85% had a library card by the end of the project. The school librarian noticed an increase in the attendance in the library.

> Librarian: "... They were in the library much more often with very definite questions...often in groups of 2 or 3 and often after school hours..."

A few students on the set design committee went to the Donnell Library and the Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center to look at books on design and photographs. They said these pictures would help them formulate their ideas for the set. Their trip to these libraries made them aware of the richness of resources available to them in this city.

When asked if "I VOLUNTARILY VISIT MY LOCAL LIBRARY":
Pre-test 30% of the students agreed or strongly agreed

Post-test 62% of the students agreed or strongly agreed

Pre-test 42% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed
Post-test **None** of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed

These same students asked the teacher to invite "someone who had an art or scene design background in to talk to the class." We invited an art teacher and an Assistant Principal of Speech/Theatre to speak to us. From these two sessions the design concept for their production was developed.

There is a definite indication of a need to involve more community based resources in a project such as this one. Students expressed a need to discuss various problems with experts in specific areas. (i.e.) lighting designer, psychologist, carpenter.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

In response to the question I HAVE GOOD IDEAS the following was noted.
Pretest 71% of the students agreed or strongly agreed
Post -test 82% of the students agreed.

Of greater significance however:

Pre-Test 8% disagreed
Post-Test **no one** disagreed.

In the initial writing exercises the students often responds with " I don't have anything to write about." or " I can't write". By the end of the sessions on script writing , the play writing's major problem was how to eliminate some of the writing material. There were too many choices to include in an hour and a half production.

The students particularly enjoyed reading their work aloud or having it read aloud by other members of the class.

> " I always hated rewriting anything..now I see how I can make it better and I like that..."
>
> "We had this idea for a dance but it didn't quite work with the theme of the play. After we talked it over in class I came up with the idea for COLOURS (a scene) and we made a few changes. Everyone loved it..."
>
> "A big problem was scene selection. We didn't know which to use we had to developed a criteria... that was hard to do - but once we set it up it made everything clearer..."

"We had to sometimes make changes in who was playing a role or in the lines in a scene. We learned that we had to make these decisions based on the qualities of the work and not on personalities. That was a big thing to learn to do."

In response to the question I KNOW HOW TO PUT ON A PLAY the following was noted.

Pre-Test	25% of the students agreed or strongly agreed
Post-Test	57% of the students agreed.
Pre-Test	29% of the students disagreed
Post-Test	only 8% of the students disagreed.

- Almost all of the students expressed the hope that they would be involved in another theatre project sometime very soon.
- Two of the students auditioned for and were accepted into and Improvisational Theatre Company that tours the schools presenting original pieces centering on issues of significance to the young people of today.
- Five students auditioned for and were accepted into the NYU Tisch School of the Arts.
- Two students auditioned for and were accepted into the City University Theatre program at City College.
- One male student, who was a truant completed the project and joined City As School to finish his diploma requirements. He will be entering a four year degree program in the fall of 1992.
- One female student who had learning disabilities and a very poor self image developed a real sense of trust in her abilities with the help of the other students involved in the project. She has finished her high school requirements and is currently enrolled in Queensboro College for the fall of 1992.
- Three students who would not even consider applying to a college at the beginning of the year, applied and were accepted to a two year college in the city system.
- The students expressed the thought that work on the project helped them in writing their essays for college admissions.

"...I know now that there are many issues to write about and I have a lot of idea about these..."

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Cecily O,Neill. ...

APPENDIX A
PRE & POST TEST SAMPLE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the number which most closely describes your feelings about the statement.

1. I feel uncomfortable creating improvisations.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

2. I have good ideas.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

3. I am an important member of my class.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

4. Familiarity with literary works is important to me.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

5. I am a leader.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

6. I prefer to watch rather than perform.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

7. I know how to put on a play.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

8. Preparation for a production is boring.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

9. Working on a script will help make me more aware of my neighborhood and surroundings.
   strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

10. There is no one in the immediate community who has any expertise that I can use.
    strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

11. Playwriting requires research.
    strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

12. Theatre productions are only good when done by professionals.
    strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

13. I work best in a group situation.
    strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

14. I voluntarily use my local library.
    strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

15. It is easy for me to get my ideas implemented.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

16. I visit my local arts center.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

17. I will always want theater to be a part of my life.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

18. It's hard for me to make friends.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

19. I enjoy rehearsals more than performance.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

20. Theatrical pieces heighten life experiences.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

21. I know a lot about my community.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

22. I am always ready to work in theatre class.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

23. The director should be the teacher not a classmate.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

24. I am a creative person.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

25. My classmate have better ideas than I do.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

26. Working on a production helps people to get along better.
strongly agree agree neutral strongly disagree disagree

Appendix B
STUDENT BIOGRAPHICAL SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire was give to the students at the beginning of the project.

1. What kinds of movies have you seen in the last two years?
2. What television programs do you watch consistently for the past two years?
3. What live theatrical performances have you seen? (Comedies, musicals, dramas)
4. How old were you when you saw your first live performance?
5. What plays have you read outside of school?
6. Who are your favorite actors?
7. What plans, if any, do you have to continue your study in theatre?
8. Are you planning on a career in the theatre? If so, in what area?
9. Have you ever performed on stage? If so, tell where when and in what?
10. Have you ever written anything to be performed? If so, describe.
11. Do you read or watch reviews?
12. Would you attend or not attend a performance based on a review?
13. What function does theatre have in our society?
14. What is the purpose of theatre?
15. Do youknow the names of any directors or producers of TV, Films or theatre? If so, list names.

Appendix C

TEACHER-RESEARCHER LOG FORM

Suggestions for developing a log

The theater teacher found that keeping an informal log was a effective method of recording the myriad impressions and thoughts that came to mind while overseeing as complex a project as this one. In addition, the researcher discovered that, often, the most promising idea or relationship in terms of script or character development was one that was only casually mentioned by a student; without a mechanism for recording the moment, it most probably would have been lost. For the same reason, the log became an invaluable resource for tracking the dynamics of the working relationships among the students.

If you are creating a brief daily log over a period of time, the goal is to communicate those ideas and experiences that stand out in your mind. This log is meant to be a help for you; design it to meet your needs. You need only plan to write for approximately 10 minutes per day (or 10 minutes per class or rehearsal).

You might want to consider:

- things that you noted about the students, the consultants, their interactions.
- things that you noted about yourself...your interactions.
- the progress, setbacks, frustrations, victories, challenges, insights, developments of relationships.
- things that you would like to do over, never do again, like to try, like to repeat, like to expand.
- ideas that you would like to share with the students, the consultants, colleagues
- areas where you would like assistance
- teaching strategies that worked

It is best to be specific (and realistic). Do not set unreasonable goals but rather concentrate on the most important information to record. It is better to describe in-depth what happens with one student (or one interaction or one process) that to attempt to describe the whole class. Feel free to expand on a major perception, concern, success or question.

Write as a habit. Set aside the same time period each day. The most convincing evidence of the value of the log is to diligently keep to a schedule for a few weeks and then read over what you have created. You will be amazed to see how useful the information is to the on-going project.

Analyze the process as you go on in order to gain the insights to give yourself direction for what to do, what to ask about, what to plan. Some suggestions:

- Read over your daily log entry after you have finished writing. Make short margin notations of ideas for the next session/rehearsal with students.

- Read back over your entries for personal analysis. Do not expect to remember valuable insights...write them down in a way you can easily retrieve them.

Sometimes it helps top make notes as you go; these rough reminders can help you later when you log in entries.

Feel free to share some of your log entries with your students and/or colleagues. Collaboration should mean that everyone shares experiences. You should also feel free to use any of these suggestions in starting students on their own log process.

Appendix D

STUDENT LOG FORMS

STUDENT LOG (BEGINNING EVALUATION OF PROCESS)

1. What I would like my role in the project to be:

2. My strength are:

3. I am less comfortable doing:

4. I think we probably should write a play on the topic of: Why?

STUDENT LOG (MID-WAY EVALUATION OF PROCESS)

1. What my role in the project has become:

2. How is it different from what I imagine at the beginning of the project:

3. I now think I could make an additional contribution to the play by:

4. What I think the most surprising aspect of our work has been so far: Why?

STUDENT LOG (FINAL EVALUATION OF PROCESS)

1. How I think differently about myself/my classmates/the process of theater form being a part of this project:

2. What effect do you think the production has had on the people around you. (parents, teachers other students):

Appendix E Resource Questionnaires

COMMUNITY RESOURCES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

(A short description of the project should accompany this form if sent or be read to the prospective resource if contact is by telephone)

Name of resource _____

Organization contact
person/Individual_____

Address _____
_____
_____

telephone _____
FAX _____

It is wise to develop a 'script' of questions that would assist you in determining whether the organization or resource would be appropriate for your needs. We found that the following information was the most useful overall.

Reason for contact:

Person who suggested contact:

Mission of the organization:

Has the person/organization had experience working with high school students?

Has the person/organization had experience with _____school?

Based on the need of the project, what could most logicallly be the contribution of the person/organization?

Does the organization have any pertinent materials?

Donated time/fee arrangement for services

Reference

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

The project plans to create a model for community involvement in a student-developed theatrical production. It will explore creative approaches to educating young people and demonstrate new ways that the classroom teacher can unitize valuable resources in the community.

A crucial aspect of this project is the involvement of "outside resources," or guests, that might be part of the students' learning and creative process in conceiving and executing an original collaborative theatre piece to be performed for our school community.

In an effort to explore the resources available in our community please take a moment to answer the following questions. (Please print your answers and circle where appropriate.)

NAME: _____ DATE:_____

DEPT: _____

1. I have interest and/or experience in the following areas of theatre:
   a. acting
   b. directing
   c. play writing
   d. costume design
   e. costume construction, sewing
   f. set design
   g. musical composition
   h choreography
   i.graphic arts
   j. publicity
   k. set construction
   l. I play the following musical instruments:
   _____

2. I might be of help addressing the following topics with the students:
   a. substance abuse
   b. family issues
   c. race relations
   d. issues of ethnicity
   e. gender issues
   f. career development
   g. political/social issues
   h. other:_____

3. The following topics interest me as focal points of student-developed play:

a. _____

b. _____

4. a. I know individuals or organizations in our community who are involved in the arts and might be willing to share their skills and experience:

Yes _____ No _____ Get back to me_____

b. Their names, affiliations, and ways to contact them are:

_____

_____

c. May we use your name in contacting them? Yes _____ No _____

5. a. I am familiar with individuals; arts, service, educational organizations; or social agencies that might share a point of view or research that is relevant to the students concept:
Yes _____ No _____ Get back to me_____

b. Their names, affiliations and ways to contact them are:

_____

_____

c. May we use your name in contacting them? Yes _____ No _____

6. I would like to help in the following specific way:

_____

_____

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND HELP.

Appendix F Post-Production Questionnaires

STUDENT POST-PRODUCTION EVALUATION FORM

Your play represents an impressive creative effort to write and produce an original play, expressive of your theater class; concerns and feelings. Your accomplishments reflect a demanding, collaborative process that utilized your talents, as well as consultants, new to you and this school. Congratulations!

Your honesty, thoughtfulness, and ideas are invaluable and will be appreciated.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR RESPONSES AND USE ADDITIONAL PAPER IF NEEDED.

NAME: _____

Check off all aspects of the project in which you participated:

I _____ Individual writing

I _____ Acting
_____ Directing
_____ Choreography
_____ Design
_____ Music

III _____ Set
_____ Costumes
_____ Props
_____ Lighting
_____ Sound
_____ Video Documentation
_____ Other:

I THE PLAY AND PERFORMANCES:

1. What were your first reactions aftedr you finished the performances?

2. How does your play express ideas and felling you care deeply about?

3. Did the subject matter of the play change your opinion about anything? If yes, what?

4. If you were a newspaper critic sent to review the show, briefly write how you would judge the production. (you might want to mention the strengths and weaknesses of the script, acting, and design.)

5. If your family or friends saw the production what were their reactions?

II THE PROCESS

1. What was the most enjoyable part of this experience?

2. What was the most surprising part of this experience?

3. What was the most difficult part of this experience?

III IMPACT OF PROJECT ON YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Has this experience changed the way you feel about yourself? If yes, how?

2. Has this experience made you feel differently about yourself:

as a theater person: How?

as a student: How?

as a member of your comunity? How?

3. Do you think differently about your future as a result of this project? If so, how?

4. What is the most valuable part of the experience for you to take with you?

IV SUGGESTIONS TO OTHERS

1. What suggestions would you make to anyone who would like to do this project in the future? What, if anything, would you change the next time around? (Use other side if necessary)

FACULTY EVALUATION

You and your classes were invited to attend the recent original drama performance produced at our school. Your help in evaluating this project would be greatly appreciated.

NAME: _____DEPARTMENT:_____

Were you a	Yes	No
• Teacher of one or more of the playwrights?	_____	_____
• Teacher of one or more of the performers?	_____	_____

1. What was your first reaction after seeing the performance?

2. Overall, did the play express ideas and feelings you believe are valid ones to our students?

3. How do you feel students watching the play reacted to it?

4. What was the most enjoyable part of the play?

5. What was the most surprising part of the play?

6. Were there weaknesses in the writing of performances?

7. If any of the playwrights were students of yours, did you note any differences in their writing, reasoning, vocabulary, and organizational skills during the length of the project?

8. Was the play useful to you as a discussion point in any of your classes? If so, how?

9. Do you see any expansion of this activity that would be relevant to your discipline and/or curriculum?

10. Any other comments (Please feel free to use the other side):

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN EVALUATING THIS PROJECT.

PARENT, GUARDIAN, RELATIVE, OR FRIEND EVALUATION

We thank you for supporting the recent original theater production at our school. Your help in evaluating what you saw would be of great value. Therefore, we are asking you to be as honest as possible when offering your evaluation. Your generosity in filling out the following questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

NAME: _____

What relationship do you have to the writers or actors in the show?

Parent Other Relative Guardian Friend

1. What was your first reaction to the performance?

2. Overall, did the play express those ideas and feelings you believe are valid ones for our students

3. Did the subject matter of the play change your opinion about anything? If yes, what?

4. What was the most enjoyable part of the play?

5. What was the most surprising part of the play?

6. You came to see this production because of one specific participant. Did this student share the experience of this year's work on the project with you?

7. Have you noticed any change in this student directly due to his/her participation in this project?

8. Based on what you saw, do you feel this is a worthwhile project for students? If yes, why?